

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of treating cartilaginous diseases and disorders in mammals comprising administering a wild-type full length Hepatocyte Growth Factor (HGF) in an amount which is effective in treating said cartilaginous diseases and disorders, wherein said cartilaginous diseases and disorders are osteoarthritis, chondrodystrophy, failure in restoration and cure of fracture, articular cartilage and articular disk injury, acute suppurative arthritis, tuberculous arthritis, syphilitic arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, rheumatic fever, systemic lupus erythematosus, spondylitis deformans, or herniated disk ~~or bone transplantation~~.

2. (Original) The treatment method for cartilaginous diseases and disorders according to claim 1, wherein the HGF is prepared by gene recombination.

3. (Withdrawn) A method of stimulating the proliferation of chondrocyte comprising administering an effective chondrocyte proliferation-stimulating amount of Hepatocyte Growth Factor (HGF).

4. (Withdrawn) A method of stimulating the production of cartilage-specific proteoglycans comprising administering an effective cartilage-specific proteoglycan production-stimulating amount of Hepatocyte Growth Factor (HGF).

5. (Original) The method of treating cartilaginous diseases and disorders in mammals according to claim 1, wherein said cartilaginous disease is osteoarthritis.

6. (Original) The method of treating cartilaginous diseases and disorders in mammals according to claim 1, wherein said cartilaginous disease is chondrodystrophy.

7. (Original) The method of treating cartilaginous diseases and disorders in mammals according to claim 1, wherein said cartilaginous disorder is failure in restoration and cure of fracture.

8. (Original) The method of treating cartilaginous diseases and disorders in mammals according to claim 1, wherein said cartilaginous disease is articular cartilage and articular disk injury.

9. (Original) The method of treating cartilaginous diseases and disorders in mammals according to claim 1, wherein said cartilaginous disease is acute suppurative arthritis.

10. (Original) The method of treating cartilaginous diseases and disorders in mammals according to claim 1, wherein said cartilaginous disease is tuberculous arthritis.

11. (Original) The method of treating cartilaginous diseases and disorders in mammals according to claim 1, wherein said cartilaginous disease is syphilitic arthritis.

12. (Original) The method of treating cartilaginous diseases and disorders in mammals according to claim 1, wherein said cartilaginous disease is rheumatoid arthritis.

13. (Original) The method of treating cartilaginous diseases and disorders in mammals according to claim 1, wherein said cartilaginous disease is rheumatic fever.

14. (Original) The method of treating cartilaginous diseases and disorders in mammals according to claim 1, wherein said cartilaginous disease is systemic lupus erythematosus.

15. (Original) The method of treating cartilaginous diseases and disorders in mammals according to claim 1, wherein said cartilaginous disease is spondylitis deformans.

16. (Original) The method of treating cartilaginous diseases and disorders in mammals according to claim 1, wherein said cartilaginous disorder is herniated disk.

17. (Cancelled).

18. (Withdrawn) The method of stimulating the proliferation of chondrocyte according to claim 3, said method comprising bringing said effective chondrocyte proliferation-stimulating amount of Hepatocyte Growth Factor (HGF) into contact with mammalian cells.

19. (Withdrawn) The method of stimulating the production of cartilage-specific proteoglycans according to claim 4, said method comprising bringing said effective cartilage-specific proteoglycan production-stimulating amount of Hepatocyte Growth Factor (HGF) into contact with mammalian cells.